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Voices of Diversity

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Real Women Have Curves Worksheet

1. Describe the *stasis* in the play: where, when, who, what, etc. in a paragraph.

The play takes place in a tiny sewing factory in east Los Angeles during the first week of September 1987. The main characters in the play are Ana, Estela, their mother Carmen, Pancha, and Rosali. Every day they wake up extremely early to go work in the Garcia Sewing Factory in a desperate attempt to earn money, become legal citizens, and make it in America as immigrants.

2. What is the *intrusion*?

The intrusion is when Estela admits that she is not yet a legal citizen, and if she does not pay her dues to the company she bought the machines from she might be deported. This is wear the action starts to take place as all the women attempt to finish the order of 100 dresses so that Estela can get the money she needs to pay off her dues and apply for citizenship.

3. What is the *unique factor*?

The unique factor is when the women discover that Estela might be deported if they do not finish the dresses in time so they can get payed, and she can pay the company she bought machines from. The woman sympathize with her because they have been in her situation and promise to work hard to finish by Friday.

4. What is the *dramatic question* that should be answered by the end of the play?

Will Estela and the woman finish the dresses in time so that they can be paid and Estela will not be deported?

5. Provide an illustration of the *two kinds of exposition* that the play has in it.

One exposition is when Estela told the women she might be deported. The other is when she kept the outcome of the date to herself, but they could obviously tell she was upset about it.

6. Identify the most *theatrical moment* in the play and of what importance it seems to be.

The most theatrical moment is when all of the women strip down to their undergarments and compare their scars and body weight. It helps to teach each woman that their insecurities are not as uncommon as they think and they learn to love their bodies and weight.

7. List some of the *themes* of the play.

Body issues, Immigration, Stereotypes, Socioeconomic issues

8. What do the principal characters *want* and what are some *obstacles* that stand in the way of them getting what they want?

Ana wants to escape the sewing factory and attend NYU to become a writer however she does not qualify for financial aid this year and her mom does not always support her. Estela wants to finish the dresses by Friday so that she can get paid and avoid being deported however the women often bicker and make mistakes with the dresses. Rosali wishes to lose weight so she can be “beautiful” but she only attempts to do this by starving herself and using diet pills which is extremely unhealthy. Carmen would love for her daughters to find a man so that she can have grandchildren. She would also like to lose weight.

9. Describe some possible *images* in the play and how does the *title* help us understand the play.

I believe the dresses themselves represent a major issue amongst the women. All of the women are described as plump or overweight. The dresses they are making are not for plus size women, but instead are for thin women. This causes a lot of body issues between the women and it is not until they learn to love their bodies that they come up with the idea of opening a boutique made for plus size women like themselves called “Real Women Have Curves”.

10. Briefly define the *family relationships* that are examined in the play.

Carmen and Ana are mother and daughter. Carmen seems to have a strained relationship with her daughter because she is always insulting and commenting on Ana’s wait. Carmen and Estela are also mother and daughter. Often times they have a strained relationship as well because Estela tries to act like her mother’s boss, but sometimes her mother agues with Estela’s orders.